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ABSTRACT

A series of articles celebrating the Bicentennial of the Constitution is presented in two volumes. The first article in Volume 1 is an interview by Bernard Murchland with Barbara Jordan discussing the effectiveness of the original Constitution. The second article, "If I Were President," is an interview by Bernard Murchland with Studs Terkel on the kind of United States seen by Terkel. David Mathews authored the last article which is the first part of a series on an in-depth look at the basic tenets of American democracy. An interview with Warren E. Burger concerning his position as Chairman of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution is the first article in Volume 2. Burger expresses his gratitude that the Congress has extended the life of the Commission to 1991 so the country can celebrate the entire Constitution. The second article is an interview with Pete Rose on "Baseball and the Game of Life" in which Rose discusses the relationship between sports and values in the United States. An article on the basic tenets of American democracy by David Mathews concludes the series. (SM)

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Reflections on America

“ The Union 200 Years Later ”

— An Interview with Barbara Jordan

“ If I Were President ”

— An Intimate Interview with Studs Terkel

“ Democracy: Principles and Practices — Part 1 ”

— by David Mathews

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Robert E. Daley

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).”

We the people...

A Celebration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution

We sometimes talk as though the ideas of the American Constitution sprang full blown from the genius of the Founders. This is far from the case. When we read the literature of the founding period we are above all struck by the groping character of the deliberations, the hesitancy, uncertainty even, with which the Founders approached the awesome task of hammering out a Constitution in much disagreement and long debates through the hot summer of 1787.

America, more than any other country, was born of debate. The Founders set the example of conversation as the premier civic virtue of a democratic republic. Their legacy is the axiom of our public life; a nation that converses together coheres. Thus it could be reasonably argued that the strength of America lies in its multiple forums for conversation — in the public and private sectors, in voluntary associations and families, in bars and parks, schools and churches. These Americans, to paraphrase Tocqueville, see how they talk!

Among recent social philosophers Hannah Arendt has best grasped the importance of conversation and articulated it most clearly. Conversation between diverse but equal participants, she said, is what sustains a vital public life. It is through conversation that we most distinctively announce what we think, what we have done, and what we expect from the world.

We think of America as a conversing society. Conversation is our energizing principle. When we talk well we reach consensus on important

questions. When the passages of dialogue are blocked our civic life withers. And our talk is always best when it is informed by reference to our beginnings.

"The beginning" Plato said, "is like a god which as long as it dwells among us saves all things."

When we look at it this way, talk is neither easy nor cheap. It is crucially important. These words by Professor Benjamin Barber of Rutgers University make the point brilliantly:

"If the definition of democracy as popular sovereignty has any meaning, then it is sovereignty over language — over talk fashioned by and for talkers themselves. Democratize language, give each citizen some control over what the community will mean by the crucial terms it uses to define all the citizens' selves and lives in public and private, and other forms of equality will follow."

Words well worth pondering!

In this bicentennial year it is good to imitate the Founders by reconsidering their legacy in light of our own problems and perplexities. It is a good time to ask: How fares the Republic? How sturdy are its values? What are its prospects? In short, how creative a society are we? *Reflections on America* is dedicated to the proposition that good conversation about such questions is crucial to a vital democracy.

This is the first in a series to be published during our Celebration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution.

An Interview with Barbara Jordan on

The Union 200 Years Later

by Bernard Murchland

Barbara Jordan was the first black woman ever elected to the United States House of Representatives. She first ran for election to the Texas House of Representatives in 1962. She lost by a vote of 46,000 to 65,000. In 1964 she tried again and lost again, although the margin was narrower this time. In 1966 she ran for the Texas Senate and won by a margin of two to one. She served two terms in the Texas Senate and in 1972 was elected to the United States House of Representatives.

She was reelected in 1974 and 1976 and resigned from politics when her congressional term ended in 1978. Most Americans remember her primarily for her active role on the bipartisan House Judiciary Committee (21 Democrats and 17 Republicans) during the Watergate hearings and her rousing keynote address to the Democratic Convention in New York in 1976. She seemed then to have the political world on a string (many thought of her as a vice-presidential candidate) and surprised her many admirers when she withdrew from politics to devote her energies to becoming, in her own words, "a very good professor."

Reflections on America interviewed Barbara Jordan in her offices at the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs. We began by talking about one of the liveliest debates in the country today on the effectiveness of the original Constitution. A growing number no longer think it is adequate to the conditions of the twentieth century. We asked Barbara Jordan for her opinion about that.

Jordan— It is a lively debate, and one that is important for the future of the country. As a matter of fact, we will have a three-day symposium on that very subject here at the LBJ School during the bicentennial year. Scholars and politicians will explore whether or not the Constitution is still adequate to our needs and problems.

ROA— Where does Barbara Jordan stand?

Jordan— I don't happen to be among the proponents for change. I realize the country has changed since 1787 and our problems are perhaps larger and more complex than ever. We have, for example, a huge bureaucracy that was not contemplated by the Founders and which runs much of the business of the country. But to move toward a parliamentary system to cope with such problems would be in my mind disastrous. On the other hand, I am not an advocate of the original intent school of thought. The Constitution has enough proven flexibility in it so that it can be stretched to accommodate the problems we face. That is why so much of what is written in it is rather vague, and intentionally so. In my judgment we could not gather today so intellectually illustrious a group as the original signers. I think they intended to draw up a document that would last, that would be adequate for all times and circumstances, one that succeeding generations would adapt and interpret as necessary.

ROA— But you would not be opposed to amendments?

Jordan— I would not per se be opposed to amendments. But the next question is: Well, what amendments would you like to see added to the Constitution? I don't have any and I don't see any proposed that I would like to see added.

ROA— What about ERA? Don't you favor that amendment?

Jordan— When I was in Congress I supported ERA because I was in favor of what it stood for. But as an amendment it would be redundant. All of our basic rights are covered in the Constitution or in existing Amendments.

ROA— Many people suggest something should be done about the length of terms of office for elected politicians.

Jordan— I don't agree with that either. I know there are those who think representatives ought to be elected for a four-year term. I don't. If I hadn't been running for reelection every two years when I was in Congress, I wouldn't have been getting on an airplane and returning to my district every other week. I think that was the original idea. This is the people's House and the representatives who serve them have got to make themselves present to the people and hear their concerns, and re-present them at the federal level. I say re-present because that is what a representative is. And it works the other way, too. The issues that are debated in Washington have to be re-presented to the people to get their views on them. I think the Founders were very wise in establishing this avenue of exchange between the people and the government and I wouldn't want to see it changed.

ROA— Clearly you think of the Constitution as an enduring document. How else do you think of it: as legislation? an ethical code? an ideological statement? as public philosophy?

Jordan— When I think of the Constitution, two words always come to mind: fundamental law. The Constitution is law and it is our basic law. The rights of every American spring from that fundamental law. As you are well aware, the drafters didn't write anything about equality as such in the first seven Articles. It was only with the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment that we had any mention of equality. That is an example of the flexibility of the Constitution, how it can be amen-

ded to accommodate urgent issues. The Constitution is policy and I teach it in my courses as a policy document. If you want to know what the public philosophy of the United States is you go to the Constitution and particularly the first ten Amendments. That is where you find the philosophy of this country.

ROA— There is a school of thought which holds that this country does not cohere around a basic set of values, that the Constitution was based on eighteenth-century liberal principles which favor a self-seeking individualism rather than a common philosophy. In fact an increasingly vocal attack upon the very foundations of American government can be heard throughout the land from both the Left and the Right, from Robert Bellah as well as from George Will. Do you agree with that?

Jordan— I do not accept that criticism. We do have a basic philosophy in this country that is commonly agreed upon. If you focus on just the

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structural aspects of the Constitution, the division of powers and so forth, the philosophy there is very implicit. But in the first ten Amendments our public philosophy is explicitly enunciated. When Madison was running for Congress he said one of the first things he wanted to do was introduce these Amendments. Of course he wanted ratification of the Constitution to proceed posthaste but the Amendments were an early offering of the Constitution. In 1787 we got the Constitution and in

1791 we got the Amendments.

ROA— What do you take to be the core value of our public philosophy?

Jordan— Freedom.

ROA— Only freedom?

Jordan— Freedom first.

ROA— Always first?

Jordan— You bet. You have to start with the basic freedoms of speech, the press, assembly, and so forth. All else flows from that. Freedom is the linchpin of our federal system. When we get to the Fourteenth Amendment we get the incorporation of equality into the basic ethos of this country. But we can't be equal unless we are free.

ROA— Increasingly one hears it said that Americans are losing their taste for freedom. The philosopher Jean Paul Sartre once said that people get bored with freedom. The exhilaration of freedom wears off and becomes humdrum like everything human. When that happens people desire a less demanding social order in which the burden of freedom will be lifted. Is it your sense that something like this might be happening in America today?

Jordan— That is not my sense. If there is anything that makes this country what I have called the crown jewel of nations it is freedom. I believe that remains so central to our identity that the American people will never tire of it. It is the root value that makes this country comfortable for all of us. Test this out and you will find that the American people have enormous resilience, they don't want to be constrained or confined, they want to be free to roam, to be creative, to think and to uncover things that seem shrouded in some kind of mystery. That inquisitiveness, that quest for knowledge and openness, that ability to soar is what we have always cherished.

ROA— Lots of people in the country don't feel they have the ability to soar. In fact, evidence would suggest they feel pretty confined and alienated — by poverty or other socially induced

pressures.

Jordan— But they don't give up. How many times do you read of a defection by Americans to some other form of government? Totalitarian governments may be more efficient than we are, they may relieve the burden of freedom as you put it earlier. But this is an unacceptable trade-off for Americans. We would never exchange freedom for efficiency — or any other value for that matter. That is why so many people defect to this country. Here, they say, I can express myself, be myself.

ROA— Do you think that vision sustains minority groups today? Blacks, for example?

Jordan— I was born in the poorest section of Houston, Texas. I saw my mother go off daily to the kitchens of the fancy folk who lived on the other side of town and I said as a child growing up there: "I know I don't always have to live on these dusty streets." Where did I get that? Why would it occur to me as a young child that I didn't have to remain confined in the Fifth Ward of Houston? My father, who worked in a warehouse and preached on Sundays, always told me: "You gotta use your head to improve your life. And I'll help you go as far as you want to go." That kind of sense or dream or vision doesn't come to one automatically. You are not necessarily born with it. There has to be something in the culture that generates that kind of dream. There has to be something that makes one say: "I don't have it now but I can get it."

ROA— You mentioned that your father preached on Sundays. Do you think the core value of freedom is rooted in the religious tradition of the country?

Jordan— You have to be very careful about that. I don't want to be identified with the religious right who don't seem to me to much favor the freedoms I cherish. As a matter of fact I am a co-founder, with Norman Lear, of People for the American Way, which is an organization that promotes freedom of expression and is intended to offset the influence of the Moral Majority. But I

also believe that religion is central to this country. America was after all founded by a religious body fleeing persecution. So it is there in the mainstream. It is important and it has to be taken into account. We have been very vigilant about the separation of Church and State and may it ever be thus. That does not mean that religion is anathema to our public philosophy. We have never hesitated to invoke God into the workings of the country. But we don't want God to implement government policy. I think on balance religion has served us well as a people and as a country. That is why it is distressing to see people take that stand and prostitute it to partisan political purposes. There can never be a congruency between religious faith and public philosophy. That is a line some find hard to draw.

ROA— We won't mention any names.

Jordan— We won't.

ROA— But you clearly reject religious fundamentalism?

Jordan— I do.

ROA— Would you want to say it is as bad as atheism?

Jordan— Perhaps not. But I would like to think that both are equally unnatural in our tradition.

ROA— Let's grant that the core value of freedom is well rooted in the American psyche. But surely you would agree that this freedom is threatened in various ways today. There is an abundant literature on various social pathologies, some of which seem insoluble in our society. Do you see a threat here?

Jordan— There are serious problems and they do threaten us. We have to address these problems frontally and not sweep them under the carpet. For black people it is crucial that we admit that we have problems as a race of people which seem to be endemic to us. Poverty is one of them. You almost always match poverty and black. Can that ever be overcome? We had a President of the United States who declared war on poverty and he

made some bold moves. But the rest of the country seems to be moving away from that kind of quote *social engineering*. What we as black people are finding is that we have to dig deeper inside ourselves to see whether or not we have the resources to deal with problems that seem to be endemic to black people in this country. How does one do that? Not all black people are poor. Some have

I think people in general are woefully ignorant of the basic public philosophy of this country. A top priority should be to mount a massive effort to educate them. I would like to see the Bicentennial focus on the definition of America. I think the Constitution defines it as well as any document.

made it. But do those who have made it devote any of their resources to programs that would help other black people? Because the country is somewhat leery of the social welfare philosophy that has prevailed since the New Deal, black people are going to have to start looking inside, using resources from the black community, to deal with these problems. That is going to have to be done. Can it be done without any government help? No. The problem is so big it is going to need some government assistance. What we as black people need to do is see it as a partnership arrangement: the government must do some things; we must do some things. The black teenage male unemployment statistics are scandalous. Whose fault is that? Black people cannot any longer say it is the fault of racism. We must ask if there is something in us that is causing that problem.

ROA— Do you have any idea what that something might be?

Jordan— There has been a feeling that opportunity was foreclosed. But opportunity may not have been foreclosed. It may be that we are not approaching opportunity with the proper set of credentials and attitudes. Thus we failed to take advantage of the opportunities that existed. So as we inventory what we have in our arsenal as black people to address these problems which seem to plague us, then we might find that education and training are keys to unlock some of those opportunities we thought were foreclosed. It is hard for black people to come to grips with this. And there are those who won't do it at all. There are some black people who just don't care enough to try to get out of where they are, who are comfortable in their circumstances. Others may not be comfortable, they may see their circumstances as oppressive, but they may feel it is all there is for them. These people must be identified and realize that that is where they are going to remain.

ROA— What about some pathologies that afflict our culture in general?

Jordan— Perhaps cynicism is preeminent among them. I tell my students to reduce the number of cynics by one.

ROA— In your famous 1976 speech to the Democratic Convention you said that many people had the feeling "that the grand American experiment is failing or has failed." Did you detect, or do you now detect, some basic loss of faith in American ideals?

Jordan— I am not prepared to say there is a basic loss of faith. I am prepared to say that Americans tend to be reluctant to take the highest moral position which they can occupy. We can see a good example of that in our support of governments that are not open and democratic in the way they treat their people. Take South Korea. We have not said one word about the political oppression that takes place there, even though it's widely known. Indonesia is another example. Why is it that we don't? Why is it that we are always

less than forthcoming with these people who are ostensible friends of this country? In our relations with other countries we don't tend to bear witness to our own highest values.

ROA— The Philippines might be another example.

Jordan— Yes, look how long it took for anything to happen there. Or Haiti. It takes us an extraordinary long time to take the highest moral position available to us. Why can't we just come out and say some things are intolerable to us?

ROA— It sometimes takes us a long time on the domestic front as well.

Jordan— Yes. Even though our public discourse is infused with a high degree of moral idealism.

ROA— Let's put our question in another way: if the American public philosophy were to be seriously threatened what would it be threatened by?

Jordan— It would take a large disillusioning event for the American people to lose faith in their basic system.

ROA— Something like Watergate?

Jordan— Something of that magnitude. Although I found people then examining more than ever the value underpinnings of the country. And we survived Watergate. To our great credit.

ROA— Where do you pin your hopes for the future?

Jordan— Certainly on my students. If I didn't believe they were a great hope for the future I wouldn't be in the job I am. They are my future. I just want to influence them to believe in what this country can do and help them do it.

ROA— Do you encounter much indifference or cynicism on the part of your students?

Jordan— Less I am sure than others. This is a school of public policy and students here want to go into public service so they are highly motivated to begin with.

ROA— What about your encounters with

students elsewhere?

Jordan— I really don't find it there either, although obviously my contacts are more limited. I think we make a very serious mistake when we begin to sell our youth short. When we do that the fault is perhaps in ourselves.

ROA—What good things do you see happening in the country now?

Jordan— I am a Democrat to the core of my being. But I have to say that Ronald Reagan has restored the presidency to a height of respect that we have known in the past but which in the recent past has been lowered. Reagan has removed much of the tarnish from the office. That's to his credit. I don't understand how he has done it. I don't think I ever will. But it is a fact. With his popularity combined with the authority he has restored to the presidency he could do a great deal for the country. Of course, to do this he would have to adopt a different moral posture and accept advice from quarters he has not done so far. I don't approve at all of the way he has changed the social agenda of the country. But I guess there is something to be said for someone who has acquired a fixed set of ideas and resists all attempts to change his mind. Those ideas are too ideological for my taste. Still, he has made real contributions and his successor will benefit from them.

ROA—What do you think our national meditation on the Constitution during the Bicentennial should accomplish?

Jordan— I think people in general are woefully ignorant of the basic public philosophy of this country. A top priority should be to mount a massive effort to educate them. I would like to see the Bicentennial focus on the definition of America. I think the Constitution defines it as well as any document. So it is a time to go back to basics, to

what a republican form of government is, what rights are, what justice means, how our freedoms are to be defined, where they come from, and how they can be protected. Another goal of the Bicentennial ought to be to reemphasize the sovereignty of the people theme that was so basic for the Founders and in our history. This has been somewhat eclipsed in our recent history. People, I think, feel dwarfed by large bureaucracies and the political process often seems remote from them. We have to reeducate ourselves to the proposition that the people are in charge.

ROA—Do you believe that is the case?

Jordan— I certainly do. A good current example at the federal level is the aid to the contras issue. People don't want this. They are not comfortable with the government's stance toward Central America and they are making themselves heard. Politicians will be hesitant to act if they are not supported by the people. At the local level there is the case of the state income tax. Texas is grossly underfinanced and should have an income tax. But it can't get by the voters. I think the people are wrong on this issue. But it is an example of their power. On this issue the people have to be educated and that is an important function of the policymaker. Most of them don't focus on their educational function enough. Politicians should be educators.

ROA—Do you have any last words?

Jordan— Not really. Except to repeat the point I already made: the Bicentennial should be an educational experience for all citizens in the basic values we live by. We lost a lot when we lost the old civics courses. One of the greatest challenges facing education is to find their equivalent for our times.

An Intimate Interview with Studs Terkel

If I Were President

by Bernard Murchland

I had no idea how I was going to interview Studs Terkel.

As my plane circled low over Lake Michigan in a holding pattern I ran some possibilities through my mind but didn't find any of them very appealing. When I got to Radio Station WMFT I tuned into Terkel's radio program which is aired daily at 10:00 a.m. It was July 18, the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, and Terkel was interviewing some people who had participated in that event. After the show he had to talk to a professor who was writing a book on Studs and his late friend, Nelson Algren. About noon we got together in his cluttered office with a magnificent eighteenth-floor view of the Chicago lakefront.

Studs was relaxed. He showed me a wall of tapes from past programs.

"I've been doing this show since 1952 so I've got quite a collection," he said. I noticed a framed front page of the *Chicago Tribune* with a headline: TERKEL WINS PULITZER PRIZE, while he poked around his desk for something he had misplaced, talking all the while about this and that. He uncovered a copy of *Chicago* magazine with his picture on the front cover. I was struck by the difference between the picture and the man in the flesh. In his photographs Terkel tends to look tough, as though he were auditioning for a

gangster's role. In reality his features are refined and remarkably sensitive. We moved some books and sat on the sofa by the window and I turned on the recorder. Terkel lit a big cigar, which fortunately didn't stay lighted long, and we began the interview.

I pulled a copy of his recent memoir *Talking to Myself* from my briefcase. It was a way of getting started. I told him that I found it a strange title coming from one who spends so much time talking to other people. "It's hard to imagine you talking to yourself," I said.

"But that's what I did," he said. "It's an oral memoir. I wanted it to have the effect of listening to someone talking. Even though it's on paper the reader hears a voice. That's the approach I use in all my books."

"In a sense you were interviewing yourself?"

"That's right."

I told him that there were good reasons to regard the interview format as the rhetorical form *par excellence* of our culture (think of the literally thousands of interviews that are conducted daily across the country) and that there was a close connection between the interview and a democratic society. Since Terkel is one of our master interviewers I was curious about how and why he happened to choose that particular style.

"It was an accretion of accidents," he answered. "I had no intention of doing what I am doing when I was in school."

He recounted a page or two of autobiography.

"I got a law degree from the University of Chicago but that's all blotted out of my mind. It was the depression and my first job was acting in radio soap operas. One thing led to another and I

became a disc jockey. But with my big mouth I was soon in trouble with the stations. Eventually I got blacklisted because I spoke out and signed a lot of things which I never retracted. I finally wound up here at WMFT. That happened during one of my frequent periods of unemployment. One day I heard a recording of Woody Guthrie on this station and I said: 'Who the hell is playing Woody Guthrie. No one has ever played Guthrie on the radio except me.' So I called the station, which was owned and operated by a young couple named Bernie and Rita Jacobson. Rita answered the phone. I introduced myself and said I sure liked their programming and I would like to come to work for them. Rita said they had no money. I said that was all right because I didn't have any money either and that made us even. That was in 1952, thirty-four years this Christmas."

I wondered why he became a lawyer in the first place.

"Because Clarence Darrow was one of my heroes."

"Did you ever practice?"

"No. But I passed the bar. I flunked the first time because it was all objective questions and I never could answer True or False. I would put down True, but with certain exceptions, or False, but with these qualifications. The second test was the essay type and I did better on it."

Clearly, there are many Studs Terkels. I asked him what his predominant self-image was. While he made one of many attempts to keep his cigar lighted I hazarded an answer to my own question. I said that based on his books that I had read and listening to his radio program which I listen to frequently in its syndicated version, I would guess that it has something to do with music. Terkel has a special affinity for certain kinds of music and when he writes or talks he often seems to be imitating musical models. So I thought there was an inescapable musicality in his makeup.

Terkel thought that was a pretty good analysis.

"That's not bad I'd say. When I was a disc

jockey one of my first programs was called 'The Wax Museum' — wax because records in those days were made of wax and museum because I liked to play old tunes — Caruso, early Armstrong,

I see a very confused and bewildered America at this moment. A few years ago we celebrated the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence and we have just celebrated the one-hundredth birthday of the Statue of Liberty. On these occasions we paid tribute to our highest ideals. But this Administration is doing some very strange things that contradict those ideals and Americans seem to be accepting them uncritically.

Harry Lauder, Jimmy Rodgers the Singing Brakeman, early jazz, things of that sort. And I would tell operatic stories in gangster language — 'dis babe Carme' — then play the actual aria. I called myself Long Shot Sylvester. The program developed quite a cult following. I particularly loved jazz and the blues. Mahalia Jackson was one of my greatest loves. In fact my very first book in 1957 was called *Giants of Jazz*."

He rummaged around on his desk for a copy but, failing, he rattled off the table of contents from memory.

"But I also love opera and symphonies," he continued. "So music has been a large part of my life. I still play as much as I can on my program."

He explained how the interviews evolved, quite accidentally, from his interest in music.

"My earliest interviews were with folk singers like Richard Bennet and Josh White. They were one, on the air, and were about their music. One day I got a call from a woman who said I should

do more interviews. I asked her why and she said: 'Well, there is something different about them. It's like the conversations were taking place in my living room.' So I started to do more of them. Then the station magazine, which was called *Perspectives*, started to print them. One of my first printed interviews was with Marlon Brando. His sister was a fan of my show. Then André Schriffrin, who is my longtime editor at Pantheon, said to me one day: 'Why don't you do a book with ordinary Chicagoans in that style?' That turned out to be *Division Street: America*. So that's how it started. André Schriffrin was the real mover and has been ever since."

Division Street: America, and other books which followed, earned Terkel a reputation as a perceptive social critic, even a social philosopher, who sees society through a particular kind of lens.

What kind of America does Studs Terkel the social critic see out there?

"I see a very confused and bewildered America at this moment. A few years ago we celebrated the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence and we have just celebrated the one-hundredth birthday of the Statue of Liberty. On these occasions we paid tribute to our highest ideals. But this Administration is doing some very strange things that contradict those ideals and Americans seem to be accepting them uncritically. Emma Lazarus said: 'Give me ... your huddled masses yearning to breathe free....' She meant everybody. So we accept a Soviet tennis player, as we should, but we kick out a Guatemalan peasant who will be killed when he goes back to his country. We accept a dissenting Cuban. Of course. But then we kick out a Salvadoran student who faces a very uncertain future back home. There is a double standard here. We confuse patriotism with macho. That's not patriotism. That isn't what Tom Paine or Jefferson or Sam Adams or Madison had in mind. They spoke of an aware citizenry. What distinguishes democracy from other forms of government is participation and involvement on the part

of the people. That's why the town meetings were so important. That's why debate is so important. Debate is the key. For me one of the great classic symbols of America is the soapbox. Debate, dispute, argumentation, taking a stand is what we need and I see too little of that. I know there are voices of dissent out there but there is no coalition of dissent so the dissenters are politically ineffective. I find people today are inclined to simplistic views, which is pretty much symbolized by the present Administration. So we beat the hell out of Grenada and think that solves something. *Grenada!* [Terkel's voice rises to a shrill pitch.] That's like Mohammed Ali beating up on Woody Allen."

I pointed out the macho posture is not just peculiar to this moment of history or to this Administration. It goes way back.

Terkel agreed that it has always been a strain but not the only one and rarely the dominant one.

"Now it has become almost official. That's what bothers me."

Terkel was gathering speed now, and waving his cigar in large circles as he spoke.

"The key is history," he went on. "Americans don't know their own history. The young today are profoundly ignorant of it, probably through no fault of their own. I was talking with some college students the other day about World War II. They knew something about it, but not very much. They knew we were in it and that we beat Germany. They weren't too sure about England and hadn't a clue about Russia, completely ignorant of the fact that Russia was our ally and lost over 20 million people. Reagan visited Bitburg but not where the Russian and American troops met at the end of the war. That would have been a powerful symbol. To know where we came from can give us a direction for the future. Not to have a past confuses us about the future. And about the present, too."

Terkel paused for a breath, then resumed:

"Now we come to another subject that is on my mind. Trivia. The glorification of trivia. Our cul-

ture is awash in trivia and I take that as a symptom of our confusion. Look at all the junk on TV. This is not worthy of an intelligent citizenry. Look at the game Trivial Pursuit, which has become a huge success and a kind of metaphor for our society. Look at sports. I like baseball and all that, but if the average American male knew one-fiftieth as much about political and social issues as he does about sports, we would be the most aware culture in history, we'd wipe Athens off the map. Listen to office talk after the Sunday football games. My God those guys are sophisticated! They know everything! But ask those same people something about Nicaragua and they are clueless. I think this says something pretty devastating about our culture."

I asked Terkel what he thought we could do about that problem.

"I have a fantasy," he answered, "which I wrote about in *Talking to Myself*. I imagine I am elected President of the United States on the Independent Party ticket. And I imagine saying something like the following in my inaugural address to the country:

"My friends, I am calling upon your intelligence. Never in any epoch of human history has our intelligence been a more necessary weapon in our arsenal for survival than it is today. Never has it been so assaulted as during the past Administration. For that matter, it has seldom been called upon by an Administration since World War II. I shall not at anytime during this brief talk use the words Family, Flag, God, or Country. Nor shall I use the phrase Standing Tall. I am your President, not your phys-ed instructor. I assume, without self-righteously proclaiming it, that you believe in the faith and in those ideas that evoke the spirit of free, thoughtful beings in a free, thoughtful society. In my travels across the land, I have run into thousands of you, in a manner of circumstance. In those casual and sometimes astonishing encounters, I have discovered something I had already known in my gut; each of you is en-

dowed with a native intelligence, not yet fully tapped. On the contrary, conditioned as you have been by Official Banality, your intelligence — your naturally endowed intelligence — has been unnaturally shoved into cold storage."

Terkel delivered the speech in oracular tones, the actor in him emerging. "Now let's consider the implications of that. People are by and large intelligent. Many of them are ignorant. But ignorance is a curable disease. We know the remedy. So I'd start by respecting that intelligence. Then the question becomes: What are we going to talk about? What are the big issues today? Nuclear war, for one. Surveys show that many young people do not expect to live out the biblical four score and ten years; they think they will perish in a nuclear war. The irony here is that we have made great medical advances in prolonging life, and will make yet greater advances. But the young think they will live shorter rather than longer lives. Then the question of how much defense is enough has to be raised. If it is the case, as I think is the case, that we have more than we need, then we could imagine great things being done with the money we save. Schools, full employment, housing, and

Surveys show that many young people do not expect to live out the biblical four score and ten years; they think they will perish in a nuclear war. The irony here is that we have made great medical advances in prolonging life, and will make yet greater advances. But the young think they will live shorter rather than longer lives.

health insurance. Bring the railroads back. What a country it could be! What a world it could be! So as President I say to the American people, and I

invite them to look deeply within before they answer: Do you have a life wish or a death wish? If you have a life wish then let us decide how we are going to spend our money."

We were interrupted at this point as Terkel answered the phone. It seemed like a strange conversation. Terkel explained to me afterwards that one of his friends sometimes has too many martinis and likes to ring in for a chat. I was surprised that he doesn't screen his calls.

"No, I can't do that," he said. "I never have and it's too late in the game to start now."

We got back to our interview. I asked Terkel if he thought Americans were happy with their lives.

"That's a hard question. I don't think so. There is a lot of dissatisfaction; a lot of emptiness. Here we come to the question of work. The work a person does is the key to happiness. And there is a lot of boring work in America. I found that out when I did my book *Working*. Not for everybody, of course. But a lot. I am happy in my work. But I have a lot of choice. Today I talked about the Spanish Civil War. Tomorrow I am interviewing a composer. Monday I might read some short stories by Ring Lardner. Sometime next week I'll talk to Richard Ford about his new novel, a rather interesting book."

I said creativity seemed to be the crux of the matter. Terkel agreed.

"When I interviewed the British philosopher and writer, Bertrand Russell, many years ago at his retreat in Wales I asked him what kind of world he envisioned. He said he would like to live in a world where children were brought up as freely as possible, a world where our creativity would have free scope. Russell distinguished between possessive and creative impulses. If you write a poem, Russell said, you don't prevent another person from writing a poem. He said he would like to see your power impulses channeled into creativity, into poetry, music, or even gardening. A creative person always has something interesting to do. Russell has the answer. But all too often society

squelches the creative impulses. That shows up most often in the way we have organized the world."

But Terkel didn't want to sound too gloomy.

"You find so many inspiring exceptions though," he said. "People who can transcend their circumstances. I once interviewed a supermarket checker. She had a great imagination. She could move back and forth in her mind in marvelous ways. But that's the individual. And, I fear, the exception."

I quoted a line from his book which I thought captured its essence, making the point in passing that most books can be boiled down to a line or two.

Terkel had written: "There comes a time in our lives when we realize we have to imbue reality with imagination."

That made the point about creativity very well so I reminded Terkel of what he had said about intelligence and said if he gave people credit for native intelligence he would by the same logic have to attribute a basic creativity to them, a basic ability to shape the conditions of their lives. Terkel didn't deny that.

"It's there," he said, "but far too often only potentially. I am concerned with what is blocking it up."

"What is blocking it up?"

"I come back to work. Much work is so numbing that the brain gets tight. So people watch goofy TV sitcoms. And there goes the evening."

"Are we a creative society?"

"There are creative people, many creative people in our society. I hesitate to say the society as a whole is creative. It could be because the potential is there. It depends on what we are encouraged to be. Take good teachers. They start by respecting their students as human beings and they encourage them to be more than they are, to do more than they think they can. They communicate an idealism. Here's another key — self-esteem. Most of us are lacking in self-esteem today. We

accept the authority. We lean on the expert. We trust the group instinct over our own judgment. Self-esteem says I am a thinking person. Ask people why they like Reagan. Because he makes them feel good. People disagree with lots of his specific policies but they have a general good feeling about him. Why is that? People know Reagan is not Jefferson; he is not Lincoln; he isn't even very bright. So people identify with him. They say: He's just like me, not too bright, and he doesn't demand anything of me but he makes me feel good. What people are saying deep down is that they lack self-esteem. My psychology may be amateurish but I think my point is valid."

"Where do you see the creative cutting edges of our society?" I asked. I presumed he would mention music. Instead he went to his desk and showed me a copy of a book called *Citizen Action and the New American Populism*, written by three community organizers.

"I look at the grass roots level," Terkel said. "I see the hope there. People taking charge of their communities. That is the best American tradition."

I asked Terkel if he considered himself a populist.

"Only if you add democratic populist," he responded. "Populism can work two ways. Klansmen are self-styled populists. *Rambo* is seen by many as populist. But that's taking totalitarian means to democratic ends. Populism can work toward totalitarianism or it can work towards democracy. I am a *democratic* populist."

We talked about some of his political heroes.

"I liked Bob La Follette and Eugene Debs. I also liked Estes Kefauver. I thought he was greatly underrated. You remember in the fifties there was a contest between him and Adlai Stevenson. I was for Kefauver. He was a populist who opposed the Cold War. He was a southerner who didn't sign the Southern Manifesto. A good man."

Not surprisingly, Terkel didn't have many heroes among contemporary politicians. None in fact.

"I'd go for Ralph Nader. I like Ralph. I like him because he goes to the core of things, he is up on the issues, and he is also a very good organizer. He is doing a lot of good in our society. He is a good

There are creative people, many creative people in our society. I hesitate to say the society as a whole is creative. It could be because the potential is there. It depends on what we are encouraged to be. Take good teachers. They start by respecting their students as human beings and they encourage them to be more than they are, to do more than they think they can. They communicate an idealism.

model of the aware citizen. But the present lot of politicians are undistinguished, differing from one another only by labels that assign them a spot on the spectrum from left to right. Those labels are meaningless. Let me demonstrate how perverted our language has become."

Terkel jumped to his feet and leaned far to the right. "From this angle," he said, "someone at the center looks left and someone slightly to the left looks radical." He reversed his position. "See how crazy it is. So Ted Kennedy is considered a leftist. He is not; he is a moderate. Bob Dole is considered a moderate. But he is a conservative. Our language is all mixed up because our political balance is off. We are not standing straight to begin with."

I told Terkel he would have to do something about all of this.

He laughed.

"I do what I can. I told you about my inaugural speech, BBC did a program on that. I hope they show it in this country."

"Are you going to write more people books?"

"Well, I am kind of stuck now. You are asking Americans what they think about their country and we have talked about whether they are happy or creative and so forth. I want to capture the feelings of Americans today. But I don't quite know how to do that. It's much tougher than any of my previous books. They were all based on a shared experience — World War II, working, the depression, the city of Chicago. This is a more global theme and there is no shared experience to begin with."

"How are you going to get a handle on it?"

"I don't know!" Terkel said emphatically, and made a last effort to light his cigar. "I'm groping now. I've started to do some interviews. But I find I can't use many of them. In my other books I could use about two out of every three. Now maybe 20 or 30 percent of them are usable. People are willing to talk about specific interests. But it is more difficult to open them up on broader issues, they seem to lack a language. I talked to two girls in our cafeteria here about nuclear war. Well, they are scared; they think there is a possibility they might not live out their normal life span; perhaps they should demonstrate; but they aren't sure. They are friends but they have never talked to one another about this issue. So you see it's very vague in their minds and hard for me to get at. I am trying to find out what the big impulse in the country is now."

I said that from what I could judge we are a relatively creative society. There are totalitarian societies which don't have our tradition of individual rights; there are other democracies that have problems we don't; there are Third World countries that haven't even entered the twentieth century. So we are, I thought, relatively well off.

"Relatively, yes," Terkel said. "But relatively is a misleading word."

Terkel rose to do another demonstration, gesturing energetically.

"Imagine I am a man on a bridge, looking down on the rivers of the world. The guy in the Volga may have drowned. Someone on the Amazon may

be floating helplessly. So I look at the Chicago river and I see that the water is only up to the guy's waist and I say he is relatively well off. But if the water is rising he is going to drown, too. The level of the water is relative but if you are going to drown, the word relative doesn't mean much. What I have to do is pull him out. The fact that someone else is worse off isn't going to stop him from drowning."

It was a good story. I applauded. Like any performer Terkel appreciated an audience. So as an encore he acted out another portion of his inaugural speech as he had done it for the BBC.

"Mine will not be an Imperial Presidency." The voice was sure and strong now. "I see no need for you to rise as a matter of ritual whenever I enter the room. I am your servant; you are not mine. I should like to see the spirit of the town meeting born again. Whether it be in the neighborhood of a large city, in a small-town church, in a school house, in a living room, in a tavern, I urge you to meet with your fellow citizens, and openly discuss, argue, debate any matter you feel is meaningful. Once you do that your juices will start to flow. You will feel you really count."

I applauded again. Terkel told me the BBC had played background music from *Dreaming* which had been a favorite of his old friend, the blues singer Big Bill Broonzy.

It was time to ring down the curtain. Terkel said he had another appointment. He was going to meet a woman he had worked with on the WPA Writer's Project during the thirties. "There were ten of us on that project and we are the only two left." He sounded for the first time that day a little sad. But that was not my emotion.

To talk to Studs Terkel is to experience varying waves of vigor, hope, joy. I shook hands with his friend and took the elevator down. It was hot in the Chicago streets, one of the hottest days of the year. I rode the Rapid Transit back to the airport, as the pattern of Stud Terkel's Chicago unfolded along the way.

DEMOCRACY: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES — PART 1

by David Mathews

(This is the first of a series of articles on the basic tenets of American Democracy.)

We cannot adequately understand the Constitution of the American Republic apart from the debate over the origins of our country. Some argue that our history began when prehistoric tribes crossed over a land bridge into what is now Alaska. Others cite a Welshman who sailed into Mobile Bay before Leif Ericson. The more conventional story begins with Columbus' discovery of the New World. Others argue the pivotal role of the settlers of Jamestown or Plymouth. Most everyone agrees on the importance of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, though some insist that it's better to date our origins from 1787, when we wrote our Constitution.

Here is another story of how the United States of America began. In this version the father of our country was John Maverick, and the place we began was Dorchester, Massachusetts. The year was 1633. Obviously that story invites a great deal of skepticism. Most associate the name "Maverick" with an unbranded cow or with a car. But there was a real John Maverick. He was a minister or teacher. And in a real sense we, as a people and a nation, can understand our origins well by recalling what he and the people of Dorchester did in 1633.

Imagine the eighth of October of that year and colonial Dorchester. Dorchester is on a narrow neck of land, a beautiful grassy plain that stretches into the bay near Boston, it is a veritable Garden of Eden. But there seems to have been a problem in this Eden that October of 1633, a problem with cows and sheep and keeping up the fences around

the green. That issue was of concern to the people in and around Dorchester, but it was John Maverick who led the way to a solution. In a phrase that has been repeated almost verbatim throughout our history John Maverick said in effect... "Let's meet; we need to talk about the problem." That simple phrase should be as honored as, "Give me liberty or give me death." Two hundred years later in the 1800s, when Alexis de Tocqueville was describing the characteristics of Americans, he found Americans still meeting to discuss common problems.

Interestingly these meetings were not restricted to just those eligible to vote. In the seventeenth century, only the free, white, male property owners had a voice in the government. But the town meetings did not merely govern; they were *public* institutions and as such were open to everyone "free or not, foreigner or inhabitant," as one document explained.

They remind us that the "public" is not the same as the "government." The public is more basic; it came first and is the source of the government. As you will see, the town meetings continued to provide a public forum for people to define their common, shared interests. These were not just meetings to govern the uses of the village greens.

The town meetings were public institutions in the way that the Mayflower Compact envisioned them. They were political societies, associations which the Compact termed "civil bodies politic." They were not authorized in the beginning by the government. Their authority was based rather on

covenants. That is, their power was in the promises people made to each other to live by their agreements. John Locke described this authority quite accurately when he wrote, "That which begins and actually constitutes any political society is nothing but the consent of any number of freemen capable of a majority to unite and incorporate into such a society."

The history of the town meetings is the history of the kind of power that can arise from common bonds and mutual promises. However weak and sinful people might have thought they were as individuals, the people of the town meetings hoped to be powerful, even virtuous, as a community of joint effort. These common endeavors, which began in talking together in the meetings, both created power and maintained it by the then newly discovered means of promise and covenant. Another distinction is important here. This "joint" effort was not simply the *massing* of individual efforts but rather the *interaction* of individual efforts.

Of course the individual town meetings were by no means perfect. Attendance was sometimes poor. The objectives were not always free expression. Cliques tried to manipulate the results. Dissenters like Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson were banished. The New England town meetings reflected all the limitations of Puritanism. But the enduring contribution of these meetings was to define, by practice, the relation of the people to the government. The meetings built a foundation that gave rise to the principle, later expressed in the Constitution, that government should represent the people's wishes, and that officials should be closely accountable to the people.

People ask these days if policymakers pay any attention to public forums when all that happens is "talk." It is clear from Governor Shirley's reaction that the first policymakers paid a great deal of attention to public forums! They regarded the town meeting talk as so important they tried time after time to repress the meetings. But through all of the repression, perhaps because of it, the town meeting

and its tradition of public discussion survived. In Boston, the town meeting held on as the only legal forum for the people to express their views.

The Public Forums, the Revolution and the Constitution

The towns of Massachusetts and other colonies, in time, became a network for political action. This network was organized in 1772 when Samuel Adams established a 21-member committee of correspondence to link the towns and explain the colonists' position "to the world." The idea was so appealing that within 15 months all but two of the colonies had established their own committees of correspondence. In this way, the "talking tradition" of the town meetings grew even stronger. And this practice of uniting the small towns and drawing authority from the people through them, set a precedent. The union of towns reflects democracy's original meaning, which was not rule by the mass of people but rule by the people as they were bound together in, or associated in, small wards called "demes."

By the time of the Revolution itself, in the Congress of 1776, there was serious debate on whether a war for independence could be successful against what was then the world's greatest superpower. The task of defending the proposed Declaration fell to a local leader, experienced in the town meetings of Braintree, John Adams. His faith in the Revolution was grounded in what he had learned about the people and the power of their "public halls." Thomas Paine said that sovereignty came out of the towns and took possession of the states. Thomas Jefferson recalled late in his life "the vigour given to our revolution in its commencement" was due to the "little republics" of the townships. He wrote that they had "thrown the whole nation into energetic action."

Even as the colonists were waging war for independence, they were writing the documents of self-government. If the King was no longer the authority for government, who was? The Revolu-

tion might have produced a vacuum in the most basic question of government: "Who is in charge?" But power had reverted to the towns and the town meeting tradition provided the answer: "We are."

Massachusetts again provided an example to others in its six-year drafting of a new state constitution. There were discussions and votes at every step. The towns voted not only on whether the proposed constitution was valid, but whether the Massachusetts General Court should have the authority to draft it. Eventually the towns sent delegates to a convention in Boston, and then had a second convention before most people were willing to approve a constitution in 1780. The publicly ratified document met the test of public allegiance that John Adams set when he wrote, "A constitution is a standard, a pillar, and a bond when it is understood, approved and beloved. But without this intelligence and attachment, it might as well be a kite or a balloon, flying in the air." And the actions in Massachusetts gave validity to Paine's observation that "A constitution is not the act of a government, but of a people constituting a government." A constitution after all is, by definition, an act of constituting.

The Little Republics and the Big Republic: The Rise of Communities and National Forums.

Some think of the adoption of the Constitution as the end of the little democracies in the town meetings and the beginning of indirect, representative democracy. That is certainly a valid interpretation; some of those who shaped the Constitution didn't come from the town meeting tradition, people like Alexander Hamilton. But perhaps little democracies and big republics are not opposites, as we sometimes think. Perhaps they are even interdependent. Leaders like John Adams and Jefferson believed strongly that the little republics, with their traditions of talk, make the big republics possible. They were not only remembering the history of the country and the Constitution, they were also reflecting a vision of democracy. In practice the

United States combined two elements of government that appear contradictory in theory, government by direct vote, plebiscite, and government through representation.

The New England town meeting, which did not survive as the principal institution of government, did survive in a thousand different kinds of public policy and community forums that have spread through the country. We have kept our constitutional system alive, in large part by the way we have talked to each other since 1787 — and not just in the city councils and legislatures or courts — but locally in the "little republics" which Jefferson saw as the strength of the American nation.

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CONVERSATIONS

★ ★ ON DEMOCRACY ★ ★

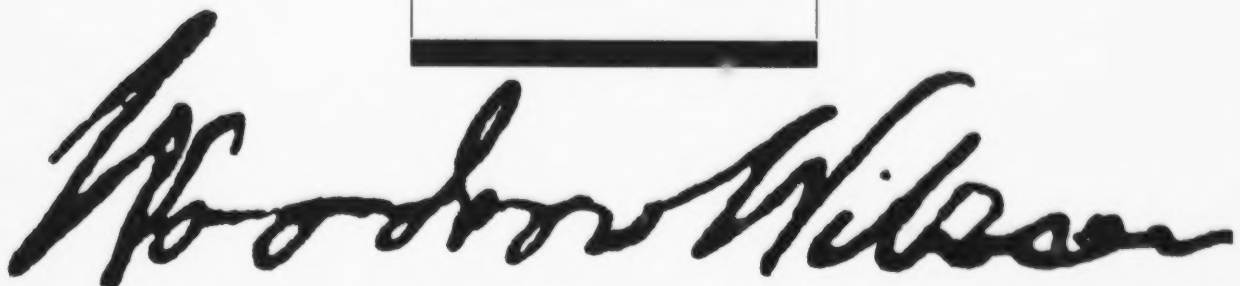
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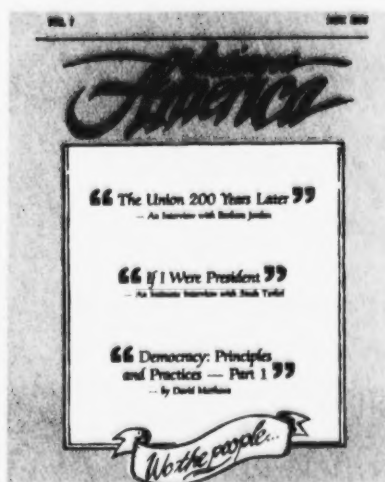
For a long time this country of ours has lacked one of the instruments which freemen have always and everywhere held fundamental. For a long time there has been no sufficient opportunity for counsel among the people; no place and method of talk, of exchange of opinion, of parley.

We must learn, we free men, to meet, as our fathers did, somehow, somewhere, for consultation. There must be discussion and debate, in which all freely participate....

The whole purpose of democracy is that we may hold counsel with one another, so as not to depend upon the understanding of one man, but to depend upon the counsel of all. For only as men are brought into counsel, and state their own needs and interests, can the general interests of a great people be compounded into a policy suitable to all.

Woodrow Wilson
1912

A large, stylized handwritten signature of Woodrow Wilson in black ink, positioned below the text box.



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“ A History and Civics Lesson For All of Us ”

— A Bicentennial Conversation with Warren E. Burger

“ Baseball and the Game of Life ”

— An Interview with Pete Rose

“ Democracy: Principles and Practices — Part 2 ”

— by David Mathews

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A Celebration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution

We sometimes talk as though the ideas of the American Constitution sprang full blown from the genius of the Founders. This is far from the case. When we read the literature of the founding period we are above all struck by the groping character of the deliberations, the hesitancy, uncertainty even, with which the Founders approached the awesome task of hammering out a Constitution in much disagreement and long debates through the hot summer of 1787.

America, more than any other country, was born of debate. The Founders set the example of conversation as the premier civic virtue of a democratic republic. Their legacy is the axiom of our public life; a nation that converses together coheres. Thus it could be reasonably argued that the strength of America lies in its multiple forums for conversation — in the public and private sectors, in voluntary associations and families, in bars and parks, schools and churches. These Americans, to paraphrase Tocqueville, see how they talk!

Among recent social philosophers Hannah Arendt has best grasped the importance of conversation and articulated it most clearly. Conversation between diverse but equal participants, she said, is what sustains a vital public life. It is through conversation that we most distinctively announce what we think, what we have done, and what we expect from the world.

We think of America as a conversing society. Conversation is our energizing principle. When we talk well we reach consensus on important

questions. When the passages of dialogue are blocked our civic life withers. And our talk is always best when it is informed by reference to our beginnings.

"The beginning" Plato said, "is like a god which as long as it dwells among us saves all things."

When we look at it this way, talk is neither easy nor cheap. It is crucially important. These words by Professor Benjamin Barber of Rutgers University make the point brilliantly:

"If the definition of democracy as popular sovereignty has any meaning, then it is sovereignty over language — over talk fashioned by and for talkers themselves. Democratize language, give each citizen some control over what the community will mean by the crucial terms it uses to define all the citizens' selves and lives in public and private, and other forms of equality will follow."

Words well worth pondering!

In this bicentennial year it is good to imitate the Founders by reconsidering their legacy in light of our own problems and perplexities. It is a good time to ask: How fares the Republic? How sturdy are its values? What are its prospects? In short, how creative a society are we? *Reflections on America* is dedicated to the proposition that good conversation about such questions is crucial to a vital democracy.

This is the first in a series to be published during our Celebration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution.

A Bicentennial Conversation with Warren E. Burger

A History and Civics Lesson For All of Us

by Bernard Murchland

In June of 1986 Warren E. Burger announced his decision to retire as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to become the full time Chairman of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution. I immediately contacted his office for an interview. He consented readily enough but it was some time before we could meet. We originally scheduled the interview for the month of June but that didn't work out. After a couple of other aborted attempts we settled on a date in late fall. Thus it came about that on the fog-filled and rain-drenched Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day I climbed the steps of the Supreme Court Building and was ushered into the office of the retired Chief Justice. He had just arrived from New York on the Metroliner. I was glad he took the train. Had he flown he probably would have been delayed by the weather and I would have missed another appointment.

He rose to greet me.

"You must be busier now than when you sat on the Court," I said.

"Well, I certainly have more traveling," he said. "While the Court was sitting I was seldom out of Washington. And there are many more speeches. In the one day that I have been away 50 speaking invitations have come in. I can't accept all of them. I can't even accept one of them."

But the Chief Justice was at ease and in good

voice as he segued in his favorite topic of conversation.

"I am grateful," he began, "that the Congress has extended the life of the Bicentennial Commission until 1991. That will enable us to do what we had wanted to do from the beginning, which is to celebrate the whole Constitution. Obviously, we won't be able to maintain a high level of interest for all of that time but we can do something each year. In 1987 we will emphasize the historical background of the Constitution. In 1988 the focus will be on the legislative branch, how it was structured, and what the Framers had in mind. It's clearly much different now. In the beginning there were 65 representatives and 26 senators. Now we have a huge bureaucracy. In 1989 the emphasis will be on the executive branch which began as virtually a shoestring operation. It, too, has become a huge bureaucracy. I remember when Roosevelt campaigned against Herbert Hoover. One of his big complaints was that Hoover had bloated his administration by hiring three secretaries. The irony is that the great growth in the executive took place under Roosevelt himself and there really wasn't any escape from it. The court system began to function in 1790 so we ought to take note of that. The Supreme Court met for the first time on February 1, 1790. There were only 19 judges in the whole system. Now there are more than 1,000 federal judges. Finally, in 1991, we will commemorate the Bill of Rights."

The Chief Justice gave me a progress report on the many activities that are planned for 1987: essay contests, various symposia and college seminars, publications and a great many media events.

"The media," he said, "have enormous power

for informing and communicating. They especially can help us tell our story to the American people and to the world. It is such a wonderful story because it is the story of our freedoms, and Americans really don't know it very well. Ten years ago at this time we were celebrating what has historically been called, 'the shot heard round the world.' That, of course, was the beginning of the Revolution. Then we had the great events that followed the Declaration of Independence: the war itself, and the development of the Articles of Confederation and the Continental Congress which undertook to govern the 13 independent countries that made up the United States. And I do mean 13 countries, for that is indeed how the states perceived themselves.

"Now we are working out plans for the celebration of the Constitution itself, and although it has never been called 'the shot heard round the world,' in many, many respects it is more important than the shot heard round the world. Other peoples had fought revolutions and gained some degree of independence. But the Constitution was what we did with our independence, and that's one of the greatest stories in all of history. That is the story we are charged with telling."

I asked the Chief Justice how he would like the story to be told.

"Personally," he said, "I would begin with the end of the Battle of Yorktown. It wasn't quite the end of the war but it was clear that the end was in sight. What immediately began to happen, as happens with allies in all wars, was that the alliance that had held together under the pressures of the war began to fall apart. One of the first manifestations of that disintegration was a bitter dispute between Maryland and Virginia over navigation rights on the Potomac river and in the Chesapeake Bay. The two states met to resolve their differences in Alexandria but they didn't get very far. Then Washington invited them down to Mount Vernon to talk it over. Because of Washington's great prestige, a compromise was worked out. But friction between the states continued to grow. Some states

treated citizens of other states as aliens, as though they came from Rome or Paris.

"In 1786 a convention was called in Annapolis to work out these problems. Only five states showed up — Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware — and they didn't make much progress ironing out their differences. But the Annapolis Convention has been called the most successful failure in our history because it issued the call for what became the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia the following year. Alexander Hamilton took the leadership at Annapolis together with Madison and John Dickinson of Delaware. Their resolution didn't mince words. It said that the nation was in serious trouble and urged the legislatures of all the states to send delegates to Philadelphia to devise whatever provisions were necessary to render the government adequate to the exigencies of the Union.

"Of course, they didn't call it a constitutional convention then. There was a great fear that the sovereignty of the states would be weakened, and the states only wanted the Philadelphia convention to rework the Articles of Confederation. Few wanted anything more than this. Patrick Henry refused to go to Philadelphia because, as he said, 'methinks I smell a rat.' The rat, of course, was a strong national government. Patrick Henry also fought like a tiger against ratification in 1788.

"It's amazing to think that, even with the combined prestige of Washington, Madison, the young John Marshall, Edmund Randolph (who didn't sign in Philadelphia but supported ratification) and Thomas Jefferson (who had reservations but argued that the Constitution should be accepted and fixed up later), the Constitution was ratified in Virginia by only ten votes. It is true that the nine states necessary for the adoption of the Constitution had already ratified. But we can scarcely imagine the Union working without the richest and most powerful state. The vote was close in New York as well, where Governor Clinton opposed ratification. Had both New York and Virginia rejected the Constitution it probably would not have

been implemented. Shay's rebellion was a good example of how close to anarchy the country was. There was great fragmentation, hostility, and parochialism. I like to illustrate the point with the story of how the troops from New Jersey reported to Washington at Valley Forge and refused to take the oath of allegiance. They said: 'We don't take an oath of allegiance to this Continental Congress or to this army. Our country is New Jersey.'

I pointed out that such parochialism was all the more surprising when we consider the universalist rhetoric of the Declaration of Independence. There Jefferson and the others presumed to speak for all mankind; yet in 1787 they could barely legislate for 13 states, or even 12 states if we bear in mind that Rhode Island refused to send any delegates to Philadelphia and didn't ratify the Constitution until many years later.

"Do you think that parochialism is still with us?" I asked.

"Oh, much of it is," the Chief Justice said. "And it has been here throughout our history. Lincoln offered the command of the United States armies to Robert E. Lee, who hated slavery, loved the Union, and didn't want secession. But he was of the eighteenth-century mind-set, so he refused and went to Richmond, theoretically to defend Virginia, but in the long run to defend the whole secessionist movement. Lee was not atypical of his time."

The Chief Justice told me another story.

"Just before World War II, I attended a convention of young business and professional men in Atlanta. The young man who welcomed us made a big point about the Battle of Atlanta. He said: 'Seventy-five years ago today (or whatever the exact number of years was) the city of Atlanta lay smoldering and in ruins, ravaged by the cruel invasion of armies from the North.' I thought he must have been joking. But he wasn't joking. Regional allegiances are still very strong in this country, and not only in the South. Doing some research recently, I was amazed to discover that Massachusetts, Connecticut and Georgia did not ratify

the Bill of Rights until 1939. Did you know that?"

I confessed I did not.

"What probably happened," he continued, "was that when it came to the legislatures it was still unfinished business and some functionary filed it away and it was forgotten. Of course, it didn't make any difference because the Bill of Rights was enforced anyway. That's a small footnote in our history of parochialism. I had never known that."

I raised a question about the benefit of recalling these troublesome beginnings.

"When we see the warts and all," I said, "might it not have the effect of diminishing our respect for the Founders and their achievement? Students, for example, might say well, after all, they were a pretty ordinary bunch."

The Chief Justice answered that if a free people do not, from time to time, look back to examine where they came from and how they got where they are, they risk losing their freedoms. He illustrated the point with another story.

"I met Nicholas Daniloff at the White House when he returned to this country after being released from a Soviet jail. He had his two children with him. I gave each child an autographed copy of the Constitution. Daniloff asked if he could have one, too. I said I normally didn't give copies of the Constitution to adults. But I gave him one with the inscription: 'you have seen and felt the difference.' Then he went out and made that the theme of his eloquent, twelve-minute speech. I was very moved by that."

I recalled what Benjamin Franklin had said in Philadelphia in 1787. When asked what the convention had created, he said: "A republic, if you can keep it."

"Have we kept it?" I asked.

"Yes," the Chief Justice answered. "We have kept it. And we can continue to keep it, but not without effort. Two things were utterly unique about our Constitution. First, its structure with division into three coequal, coordinate branches of government was deliberately created to provide for

checks and balances. This had never been tried in a national government in all of human history. We know from experience that this kind of structure is not always very efficient but it does protect freedoms. We value efficiency in the conduct of business and industry, but efficiency was not the primary objective of the Framers. Freedom was the primary objective. Secondly, this freedom unleashed the creative energies of our people. Other nations had industrious, talented, and ambitious people, but our unique new system allowed every person to develop God-given talents and abilities without the heavy hand of government. We cannot forget this achievement and to a deplorable extent we have forgotten it."

"Are we to blame the schools for our historical amnesia?" I asked.

"I don't think blame is the word we want here," he said. "But it is a fact that collectively we have done a very poor job of teaching the young our heritage. One of our Bicentennial projects is a series of playlets on different aspects of the Constitution. One, on the Virginia ratification convention, is finished. Students are the actors and the text is right out of the record. I've consulted with education experts and they are very much in favor of involving students in this way. One educator told me she was ecstatic. I asked them if we should aim at high school students but they all agreed that we should begin earlier, as soon as students can read which for this kind of material is the fourth grade."

I assumed that the Chief Justice would see some special role for the courts during the Bicentennial year. He said that the legal profession did indeed have a special duty.

"I think lawyers have a special responsibility as guardians of the Constitution," he explained. "You know, of course, that lawyers played important roles at the Convention, particularly on key committees. Three attorneys — George Wythe, the great Virginia law teacher of the period, Alexander Hamilton from New York and Charles Pinckney from South Carolina — drafted the rules of proce-

dures for the Convention. We also know that lawyers played an important part in resolving the question of representation in the two houses of Congress. The Convention nearly bogged down over this issue. The issue was finally resolved by the Great Compromise, which stipulated that the United States Senate would include two members from each state, and the United States House of Representatives would be apportioned by population. This breakthrough was engineered by the Committee on Compromise which had 11 members, eight of whom were lawyers. Of the eight, three later served on the Supreme Court of the United States, Oliver Ellsworth and John Rutledge as Chief Justices, and William Paterson as Associate Justice. The role of the eight lawyers on this key committee was critical."

Mr. Burger noted some activities that are planned for 1987 under the sponsorship of the American Bar Association.

"The Committee on Public Understanding About the Law is cooperating with the National Commission on the Bicentennial of the Constitution to remind all of us of our constitutional heritage and its continuing role in our daily lives. The project 'WE THE PEOPLE' is the centerpiece. It will include a series of television programs to be broadcast over the Public Broadcasting System in 1987. These programs will trace the historical development of constitutional principles. The American Bar Association's program will also include a national public radio series; a Sunday newspaper supplement series, in cooperation with the American Newspaper Publishers Association, and teaching guides and resource handbooks."

We talked briefly about some of the controversial issues over the courts like judicial activism and original intent.

"There is nothing new in such attacks," the Chief Justice said, "and there is nothing inherently bad in most of them. The Constitution itself was under attack almost from the moment it was signed. People have a right to challenge govern-

ment officials — whether the President, the Congress or the Courts. That is what an open society of free people is all about.

"In 1976 we had a conference commemorating Roscoe Pound's famous 1906 speech on the Causes of Present Dissatisfactions with the Administration of Justice. One of the papers in that conference made the point that the judiciary system is a victim of its own success. Because it does things well and with more expediency than the other branches of the government people tend to go to the courts to achieve certain social goals. I don't suggest that this is true. But it is true that people have this perception of the courts."

"What about original intent?"

"People are free to express their opinions on these matters," the Justice said. "On the question of judicial supremacy Jefferson had far more radical things to say than Attorney General Meese. I keep reminding people of that."

As it happened I had just finished giving a seminar on Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* and was carrying a copy of it in my briefcase at the time. I called attention to some passages where Tocqueville was high in his praise of the American court system, calling it one of the most powerful barriers that had ever been erected against tyranny and going so far as to say that lawyers were the natural aristocrats of the American democracy.

"I wouldn't say that now," Mr. Burger said. "Lawyers aren't going upward in my judgment. I have been scolding them for the last several years and my last report to the Bar Association was even stronger. I've come down particularly hard on lawyer advertising. Some lawyers counter that the courts themselves permit it. But that's no answer at all. Just because the Constitution permits something doesn't mean that it is the professionally appropriate thing to do."

"What," I asked, "do you recommend?"

"More emphasis on ethics and professional standards in law schools. Some years ago I got into quite a row for criticizing the curriculum of the

law schools. Professors said that you learned ethics at your mother's knee or by osmosis. But we have to ask what kind of osmosis. It may not be the right kind. When I came into office the Code of Judicial Ethics, drafted by a committee headed by Chief Justice Robert Taft, was somewhat out of date. I proposed a review of that code and it is now going through a second review. Two years ago I asked the American Bar Association to create a commission on professionalism to examine what I think is a downhill slide. They did and their report came in last August. I urged the Association to treat this as simply a diagnosis. It was pretty severe. It didn't deal with advertising alone, but with unethical conduct in general, which is more widespread now than at any time in the 50 years since I was graduated from law school."

"Is that a problem peculiar to the legal profession?"

"No, I wouldn't say so. The neighborhood has broken down. The family to some extent has broken down. Obviously Wall Street has broken down. The whole takeover syndrome is symptomatic of a general breakdown in standards."

"Does this add up to a moral crisis in our society?"

"Perhaps crisis is not the right word. My friend Bill Norris, who is the former chairman of Control Data Corporation, wrote an article about the human trauma caused by corporate takeovers — families uprooted, jobs lost, and so forth. He says our society is in a moral slump. That's a good word."

"Are you relatively pleased with the cooperation you are getting from people, from the Congress in particular?"

"Relatively, yes. I don't expect to find the kind of support that was given in 1976. Then Congress appropriated 200 million dollars. We have 22 million."

"With the hope of more?"

"With the hope of more. And we are just starting to approach the private sector. The planning for the

Bicentennial should have started four or five years ago. The Parks Service has been preparing longer than anyone. And the military has been at it for a long time. I didn't realize until recently when I spoke to a couple of professional military groups how knowledgeable they are about the Constitution. I would almost go so far as to say that the military people have a better understanding of the historical aspects of our Constitution than most lawyers."

"That is interesting. What's the reason for that?"

"I discovered the reason goes back to George Washington. You remember how Washington made a great ceremony of resigning from the army after he was elected President and refused to wear a uniform when he took the oath of office in 1789? That separation has been pounded into the military, the army particularly. Lawyers and business men don't have as much of this history in their minds; they might be well advised to educate themselves. That's why we hope to distribute the Constitution widely. I originally estimated we would need 50 million copies but that figure is too low."

At this point the Chief Justice interrupted himself to give me a pocketbook edition of the Constitution in which he states in his foreword that the Bicentennial should be a history and civics lesson for all of us.

"Of course, distributing copies of the Constitution alone isn't enough. That's only one step. We have to do a lot to stimulate awareness. CBS has already started with one-minute plugs. I've done one. The President has done one, as have many others. Recently I met with leaders of the American Hotel Association about what they can do. They are wondering if they should give out copies of the Constitution."

"Like *Gideon Bibles*?"

"I would like to get more readership than the *Gideon Bible* gets."

The important dates of the Bicentennial year are

May 14, when the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia, and September 17, when the Constitution was signed. I asked the Chief Justice if both dates would be highlighted.

"We are looking to September as the kickoff for the following four years with each year, as I said, emphasizing one of the three branches and 1991 concentrating on the Bill of Rights."

I had one more question about the genesis of the Chief Justice's personal interest in the Bicentennial celebration. I asked him what formative influences in his life accounted for this ruling passion of his retirement years. Something he read perhaps, or some influential teacher?

"It was the year I didn't go to school," he said.

I laughed, nervously.

"The year you didn't go to school?"

"At age ten I had undiagnosed polio and stayed home from school. I read all that year, books that my brothers and sisters brought home, especially books that one sensitive teacher sent me. I read about Clay and Calhoun, Jefferson and George Washington, and the Founding years. That was a very important year. I didn't go to college in the ordinary sense. I went to night school for both my baccalaureate and law degrees. My teachers in law school took a personal interest in their students. All of them were practitioners of the law but many of them had a good sense of history and wove history into what they were teaching. They loved the law but in a broad, liberal context. I began in those years to think about what I am thinking about now."

The rain continued to fall heavily in the courtyard outside and the shadows of the late afternoon were beginning to close in. I commended the Chief Justice for the great work he was doing and thanked him for his generosity and courtesy toward me. I felt throughout the interview as though I had been talking to a friend.

An Interview with Pete Rose on

Baseball and the Game of Life

In no country do sports occupy so central a place in society's scheme of values as in America. Americans care deeply about sports; they revere athletes; and they link their concepts of right and wrong, of meaning and destiny, to the games that are played out on the diamond and gridiron; on the court and the rink; on the track and in the pool. Indeed, in America sports events are often quasi-mythic events.

One such event took place on a fall evening in 1985 when a 44-year-old baseball player got his 4,192nd career hit in Riverfront Stadium in Cincinnati, thereby breaking the record of the venerable Ty Cobb.

When the editors of *ROA* were thinking about who they might talk to on the relationship between sports and values in America, Pete Rose's name came up repeatedly. The memory of that fall night in Cincinnati was still fresh in our minds. So the Reds publicity office was contacted, and in due course a meeting was arranged with Rose in a suburban inn near his home. Through a long lunch and into the late afternoon, the editors talked with one of America's athletic legends.

Some of what was said there is recorded in the following interview.

ROA— You are identified in the public's mind with the old-fashioned values of hard work, dedication, and discipline. Do you think that ethic is being eroded in modern-day America?

Rose— What is different today from when I grew up is that everything seems to rotate around money. As a result, more people are concerned with money than they are with each other. I would guess that in the World Series this year there were more guys thinking about what they could do individually than what they could do as a team. I don't think it is so much that sports has changed or business has changed. But society has changed.

ROA— For the worse?

Rose— Not necessarily. In some cases it has. There are players you can give a long-term, lucrative contract to, and it won't affect their play at all. Others you can't give a two-year contract to. It all depends.

ROA— Do you think athletes are overpaid?

Rose— Some are. Some of all of us are overpaid.

ROA— Are you overpaid?

Rose— I think a player of my caliber, by which I mean someone who has a chance of making the Hall of Fame, is both overpaid and underpaid at one time or another in his career. I led the League in hits one year and made only \$1,200. I hit 219 last year and made a million.

ROA— Are there any underpaid ballplayers?

Rose— In a given year and relative to their performance, some athletes aren't getting what they should. On the other hand, what free agency has done is create high salaries for fringe players. We have bench warmers who make \$400,000 or \$500,000 a year. I resent it, though, when people

single out ball players. What about Ivan Lendl who gets \$200,000 for a weekend tennis tournament. Or somebody hitting a golf ball for three days for as much. We play two weeks in a World Series and get \$80,000. For some strange reason, people think that is a lot of money.

ROA— Still, there is a large question in many people's minds about what they perceive to be disproportionate salaries for athletes. What do you think about the situation of the college football coach who is paid more than the professor?

Rose— I wouldn't deny that teachers are underpaid. I have personally always thought the most underpaid profession in our society is the police. They put their lives on the line every day.

ROA— Would you agree to raise the salaries of teachers and policemen by lowering the salaries of athletes?

Rose— I think you would get in trouble if you tried that. People pay to see a movie star or an athlete. But they don't pay to see a professor, even though the professor is as important or more important than an entertainer. Americans value different things in different ways. And it's for sure that they are willing to pay a bundle to see entertainers. So I have to conclude that Americans place a high value on entertainment. They must. Otherwise, they wouldn't shell out.

ROA— Do you think athletes get paid what they are worth?

Rose— They get paid what the owners think they are worth.

ROA— Basically, you aren't bothered by high salaries for athletes?

Rose— No. You always hear owners saying they are going broke, but they aren't. Owners are shrewd business people. They are not on an ego trip. They are making money.

ROA— What about the love of the sport?

Rose— In the old days that used to be the case. Not any more, for the most part. Now many teams are owned by corporations.

ROA— Does this affect players' self-esteem?

Rose— I can only speak for myself. What affects me is the way I am treated by the people I work for. That is why in 1978 when I played out my option, I left the Reds. The last thing in the world I wanted to do was leave Cincinnati. But I convinced myself that I was right because the people who were running the team no longer wanted me. I don't want to work for someone who doesn't want me. I was lucky to be able to go to Philadelphia.

ROA— What about players who aren't so lucky?

Rose— It must be rough. It must be really rough. Of course, that's easy for me to say because I have been on top my whole career. I have played in more winning games than anyone in baseball. But what about someone who is stuck with a losing team and a team that isn't ever going to win during his career? That's got to have a negative effect on the person involved. I can't remember the last time I went to spring training without thinking I had a chance of going to the World Series. But there are lots of teams who start the season knowing full well they have no chance of going to the World Series or even having a winning season.

ROA— Does that make it difficult for you to sympathize with losers?

Rose— Yes, it does.

ROA— Why?

Rose— Because I think there are two different attitudes you can go through life with. You can have a positive attitude, or you can have a negative attitude; call it a winning or losing attitude. I have a winning attitude. I had it from the beginning, and I was able to develop it because of who I have been with and the teams I have been on.

ROA— You don't seem to see much value in losing?

Rose— No, none at all.

ROA— Is winning everything?

Rose— Nobody pays you to lose.

ROA— What about the old saw that it isn't whether you win or lose but how you play the game?

Rose— I think the saw is wrong. We don't say that about other professions. We don't say it doesn't matter whether or not you are a good surgeon so long as you are operating on people. We expect a surgeon to be a good surgeon. If it doesn't matter whether you win or lose, why do we keep score?

ROA— What do you do when you lose?

Rose— I wouldn't say I am a sore loser. In this business you have to lose some games. An individual player is going to be off, sometimes for long periods of time. But when I do lose, I always have a mind session with myself to try to determine what went wrong and avoid it next time.

ROA— Is that what you did when the Reds lost to the Astros last year?

Rose— Yes. And we will be ready for them next year. The Astros weren't a better team than we were, but they were better on the days they played us. That is our fault, and we've got to figure out what went wrong. We can't blame our failure on someone else.

ROA— Do you think America has a winning attitude today?

Rose— Oh, sure. America is great. I wouldn't live anywhere else.

ROA— When you say that America is great, what specifically do you mean? What do you like about America?

Rose— Its unity, its variety, its traditions. I was fortunate enough to be cochairman of Hands Across America with Kenny Rogers, and that gave me a firsthand view of what America can do when it pulls together.

ROA— You travel a lot. Do you like American cities?

Rose— There are great American cities like Atlanta and Los Angeles. Most cities are really cleaning up now. Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and even Cin-

cinnati have become very interesting cities.

ROA— What about some of the big problems? Drugs, for example?

Rose— You have that no matter what country you are in.

ROA— Is our problem greater?

Rose— I don't know. Probably, because we have more people.

ROA— What about drugs in sports?

Rose— I don't think it is any more prevalent than in other professions.

ROA— But don't people expect more of athletes? Aren't they supposed to be role models in American society?

Rose— I don't know about that.

ROA— Didn't you grow up with that notion?

Rose— Yeah. I grew up with it, but I am not sure it is correct.

ROA— Why not?

Rose— Suppose you and I are walking down the street. More people will recognize me. They will ask me for my autograph, and I will be gracious and give it to them. But other than that, why should I act any different than you or anyone else?

ROA— It isn't a question of how you or I act but of how they act, of how people react to you.

Rose— I think people are more reflective than that. Suppose we talk to them for a while. Then they might admire you more than me.

ROA— But wouldn't they still expect more of you?

Rose— I am not sure. Suppose instead of being with me you were with an athlete who was up on a drug charge. The problem is that we athletes don't have a personal life because of the press. There is nothing I could tell you about myself that you couldn't read somewhere.

ROA— Do you resent that?

Rose— There is nothing I can do about it. I accept it as a fact of life.

ROA— You are raising a very serious question about privacy. That is a basic right guaranteed by

the Constitution.

Rose— I have to get my phone number changed every five weeks or so. People call up and harass me at all hours of the day or night. People can be very rude and inconsiderate. I find it hard to be nice to them. They will interrupt your meal for an autograph and bring the whole family over to your table.

ROA— What do you do in a case like that?

Rose— Sign it, quickly. I often wonder what people do with autographs. People come up to me with scraps of paper scarcely big enough to write my name on. What do they do with that?

ROA— But are you bothered by all of this?

Rose— I don't want to be too hypocritical about it. After all, I am always putting my mug on TV and in the newspapers. If I didn't want people to recognize me, I wouldn't do that. What I really can't stand is people who interrupt a ball game for an autograph. I have been playing first base and have had fans scream at me to come over to sign a scorecard. I really can't stand that.

ROA— Perhaps they feel they are paying your salary so they have some right.

Rose— The way I figure it we are all paying everybody else's salary. When I buy a tube of toothpaste, I am paying the salaries of the people who manufacture the toothpaste.

ROA— You speak a lot before high school audiences. What do you tell them?

Rose— I tell them to get their education. I tell them that I was lucky, but my way is not the best way. I was very active in sports in high school. At the end of my freshman year I wanted more than anything else to try out for the varsity football team. When the letter of intent didn't come to go out to spring practice, I was heartbroken. I didn't go to school at all during my sophomore year. I got up and dressed and left the house, but I didn't go to school. I don't know what I did. I goofed off. I said to hell with school. I eventually settled down. But I don't recommend my way to kids today. I tell

them that they can have the most expensive car, lots of money, the biggest house, and they can lose it all. But they can't lose what they have in their heads. That's my philosophy in a nutshell. I tell the kids to get that education. The more they know, the better off they are going to be.

ROA— Do you think if you lost it all, you could practice that philosophy? Do you have enough in your head to keep you on an even keel?

Rose— Oh, yes.

ROA— What would you do?

Rose— I don't know. I don't ever think of things like that.

ROA— You mean you don't think about losing.

Rose— There are certain questions I can't answer. One is: What would you be if you weren't a ball player? I don't know. I never think about that because I have always been a ball player. I guess the best I can do is say that whatever I did I would be very aggressive at it. I would try to be number one.

ROA— Do you speak often to college groups?

Rose— No. The only time I was ever in a college classroom was once when I visited Woody Hayes at Ohio State. He took me into a classroom and I talked to the students for about 20 minutes. One of them asked me if I had ever gone to college. I said, "No, but I almost bought one once!" They laughed and we hit it off pretty good.

ROA— You also speak frequently to adult groups. What do you tell them?

Rose— I don't have a set speech. I prefer to talk a few minutes and then take questions.

ROA— Do you always talk about baseball?

Rose— Not necessarily.

ROA— What else do you talk about?

Rose— I talk about my values. I talk about being aggressive.

ROA— You mentioned that before. Why do you think being aggressive is important?

Rose— Because it's something I learned from experience. People always ask me why I run so

hard. Because once early in my career we were playing a game in Chicago. We were losing 8-0 at the top of the ninth with two out and no one on. I came to bat and hit a one hopper back to the pitcher. I ran harder than I had ever run before. The pitcher threw the ball high, and the first baseman had to jump to get it. When he came back down, I was safe on base. When our turn at bat was over, we were winning 9-8. I'll never forget that. Unfortunately, we lost the game because Lou Brock hit a homer in the bottom of the ninth. But I'll never forget the game. It taught me to run my tail off every time I get a chance. I know the first time I don't run and someone drops the ball, I've wasted 24 years of hustle.

ROA— What else do you talk about?

Rose— I talk about being confident, about hard work. That is why a lot of companies like me. I am a self-made man. No one gave me anything. I wouldn't have it any other way. I worked hard to get what I got. And I had a lot of help along the way, especially from my father. The basic point I try to get across to any audience I talk to is that there isn't anything in the world you can't accomplish if you want it bad enough and if you go about it the right way. I think that life, no matter what profession you are in, is nothing more than a game of habits, and the more good habits you have, the more successful you are going to be. To get hits in baseball, you have to take batting practice. I see a lot of athletes practice wrong. They have a good chance of playing wrong. The basics are important for any walk of life.

ROA— What are some of your other values?

Rose— I talk about having fun. I think that is very important. If you can have fun at what you do, then it isn't a job.

ROA— Is baseball fun?

Rose— You bet! It's like having a license to steal.

ROA— Do most ball players think it is fun?

Rose— If they don't, they're crazy! What

you've got to realize is that in baseball we're nothing more than grown-ups playing a kids' game. I played baseball for 18 years for nothing. In my first two years in the minor leagues I made \$400 a month. The last year I played in Philadelphia I made \$13,000 a game doing the same thing, and I still approached the game the same way. It was the same game, and it was the same me.

ROA— So your thinking about baseball hasn't changed? Has your thinking about anything else changed?

Rose— What I am trying to say is that the way I think about baseball is exactly the way I think about life.

ROA— Baseball is a mirror image of life?

Rose— It's part of life.

ROA— What word would best describe you?

Rose— I'd say the best word to describe me is enthusiastic.

ROA— Are you impatient with people who don't share your values?

Rose— If they are on my team, yes. If not, then I don't worry about it because they make my job easier. I don't like to be preachy. I think the best way to teach is by example. That is how I learned from my father. That is how my son learns. I have the same relationship with my son as my father had with me. I don't think too many parents can say that. And that's how my players learn. They watch me. In 24 years I have never been late, never missed batting practice once. The only two things I tell my players is to give 110 percent and to be on time. Unless you are a nitpicker, the best way to manage is with one ear and one eye.

ROA— Speaking of your son, do you think a baseball career is hard on family life?

Rose— It's got to be. It's the hardest of all sports because we do the most traveling and play the longest season. We have 81 days on the road. The easiest is football because they usually play only on weekends and are gone overnight. Basketball is only 81 games.

ROA— Do you enjoy your role as manager?

Rose— Yes. I hope to be managing for a long time. There are frustrations, though. Players don't think about the game like we did, say, ten years ago. They don't have the dedication, don't love the game the way we used to.

ROA— Why is that?

Rose— It's the money factor again. It spoils a lot of players. They use the slightest injury as an excuse to miss games. Or they miss games without an excuse. The most we can fine them is \$499. That isn't much when you are making a million or so a year. When a player makes more than a manager, authority suffers. I am lucky there because I make as much as my players. I wouldn't have anyone on my team I didn't want.

ROA— What is your biggest gripe?

Rose— Sportswriters. We don't have as many down-to-earth writers as we had in the past who loved the game and were dedicated to their craft. They had a real respect for facts. Many writers today aren't interested in facts. They are more interested in creating controversy than in reporting the sport. They can get on a player for the way he wears his hair. There are a lot of hotshot college guys writing sports to get ahead. Let me give you an example. A writer recently said that Ralph Sampson, the basketball player with the Houston Rockets, wasn't playing his best because he wanted the team to look bad so the coach would get fired. Sampson said nothing could be further from the truth and that the report damaged his image. How does a guy get away with writing an article like that? What's that got to do with reporting sports? Is that good journalism?

ROA— Do the writers get on you?

Rose— Sure. Last April I was on the disabled list and only batted ten times. The papers all reported that I was 0 for April, not 0 for 10 which was the case. And that is only the equivalent of two games. They made it sound like an eternity when it

was only ten at bats. Take another example. Some writers got the idea of running a survey to see if I should retire. Only 500 people out of a million or so responded, and the survey was based on 30 at bats. Last spring I was something like 4 or 5 for 30. And on that basis, they ran a survey. If it were based on 300 at bats, I could see it. I've had more hits than anyone in baseball, and I think that's shoddy treatment.

ROA— Do you think the writers are deliberately trying to damage you?

Rose— I don't know. I figure they have decided that it is time for me to retire so they are going to beat that horse until it happens. When the Reds got off to a 6 and 19 start last spring, the papers blamed me as a player when I was on the disabled list for most of April.

ROA— That raises the question of honesty. One thing that makes you popular with the public is that you have always spoken out honestly.

Rose— I went through a divorce and a paternity suit plus several salary wars and came out of all that with more fans. That's because I don't lie about anything. I don't try to pull the wool over anyone's eyes or take potshots at anybody. Although people took plenty at me.

ROA— Is baseball still the all-American game?

Rose— I think so. I like football and other sports. But last year every team in both leagues drew more than a million fans. Pittsburgh did it on the last day of the season. That's the first time in history that's happened. So I'd say baseball is very healthy and as popular as it has ever been.

ROA— You have written a couple of books. Is there another book in your future?

Rose— Roger Kahn, who wrote *The Boys of Summer*, is doing a biography of me. I don't think he has a title yet, but it will be out next spring. It's going to be the whole story, no holds barred.

ROA— We look forward to reading it. Thank you very much for a stimulating interview.

DEMOCRACY: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES — PART 2

by David Mathews

(This is the second in a series of articles on the basic tenets of American Democracy.)

In Part 1 of this series I tried to show that the New England town meetings generated a strong sense of the public as the source of government. Government was not an entity imposed upon the people; rather, it was based upon and depended upon the associations and covenants the people formed among themselves. In other words, government grew out of the exercise of popular sovereignty, and that sovereignty was meant to be exercised continuously. The viability of our contract with government means always making certain that the public assumes its undellegable responsibilities.

Rediscovering the Public

As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Constitution, we would do well to remind ourselves of this strong sense of what the public means, for it is a fact that we have in large measure lost. As John Dewey wrote some 50 years ago, "the outstanding problem of the Public is the discovery and identification of itself." We cannot hope to have a vigorous political life or confront serious questions of public policy education when the world "public" itself is quite simply unavailable for large numbers of people.

For some officials and bureaucrats in government, the public is unavailable because it is an abstraction. The abstraction can be honored in principle, can be recognized rhetorically, but in practice, the real Public is not essential in the operation of government. The view is that ours is a representative democracy; therefore, it is not

necessary to deal with the public directly in ways other than through elections.

For those who believe that the public is essential in the governing, and not restricted to voting, there are other obstacles that make the public still unavailable. In the view of these officials, the public is "unreachable"; that is, there is no efficient way to get at the whole of the public. All you can do is get in touch with part of the public — then only at great expense. And letting in part of the public — some special interest within the public — may be worse than doing nothing at all.

Others find the public unavailable because it is not understandable. "Why talk to the public?" "You can hear anything you want." The bureaucrats making those statements do not mean to be derogatory, only candid. The public appears as a conglomeration of factions with no common language and no common purposes — beyond those in the broadest of platitudes. The public speaks in a myriad of languages about a myriad of objectives, confused and conflicting. The public is unintelligible.

Others find the public unavailable because they are convinced that the public is uninformed. The general public simply does not, in fact cannot, know enough to comprehend the issues government has to address. The detailed, often technical, knowledge necessary for government's decisions is considered more than we can reasonably expect even an educated public to master.

Our problem, quite frankly, has been with the concepts we use. Those interested in public policy

education and civic literacy, in citizenship education, in citizenship participation, have often met with reactions that range somewhere between a polite yawn and genuine puzzlement. It is difficult to develop programs in public policy education when the term *public* is one of nonmeaning. So, I have been revisiting the uses (or disuses) of *public* as an idea.

Two Problems

Understanding the public poses difficult conceptual problems. The first is to understand public in relation to private or individual, on the one hand, and common or collective, on the other. Is thinking about public a danger to our individuality? Is it just one step away from an insidious collectivism? Second, it is imperative to look at *public* in comparison with *political* or *governmental*. Can we use the one term interchangeably for the other two? What is the public's relationship to all of the instruments of the polity, the state itself, the processes and institutions of politics, and the government?

In the *Company of Strangers*, Parker J. Palmer argues that *public* is not legitimately a synonym for either political processes or the government itself. *Public* is, he argues, pre-governmental, even pre-political.

I found it useful to begin with the classical roots of public. There are two. The word "public" is rooted in *pubes*, the term for maturity, implying the ability to understand the consequences of individual actions on others, the ability to see beyond ourselves. The other origin of the word "public" is in the Greek word, *kom-ios*, for *common* which itself derives from the expression for "caring with." It is a useful reminder that there is an indispensable emotional connotation to public; it is what we recall in the phrase "public spirit."

Public life is well defined as life lived in recognition of the consequences of, and potential in, our relations with others, both direct and indirect, over extended time. But the public is not simply a thing; it is a capacity. Perhaps it is even useful to

think of public as if it were a verb so that we could talk about the ability "to public."

With that clue in hand — public as capacity, public as maturity — we can proceed to answer the second question: are public and private antithetical? I think not. The public is not the antithesis of private; it is more its corollary. Richard Sennett's sense of public and private as alternate, but not contradictory, modes of expression is useful. The Greeks had two words for "private." One word described an individual who was able to understand only his or her own perspective. The Greek word for that kind of private person has become our word "idiot." The other term for private, though, is not at all negative, quite the contrary. The second word derives from the Greek *oikos* for family or household. There is nothing wrong in attending to one's own household, nor does it preclude attending to public matters. To think of public and private as antagonistic is to fail to understand the necessary interrelationship between the two. Pericles, you may recall, said that the Greeks properly had both private (household) and public duties. *Public* and *private* are more corollaries than antitheses.

But what about "public" and "common"? At first, I was not inclined to report that "public" had a Greek root in the word *koinon*, "common." Concentrating on the Latin, I could have made my case much stronger. But "common" and "mature" states have similarities. Both are predicated on an appreciation for, or a recognition of, the importance of relationships. Recall that *koinon* derives from *kom-ios*, meaning to "care with." What an important leap of mind and spirit it was when people could see a bond, a relationship, in looking at others, not just those in their family or kinship group. That recognition is the basis for the idea of common as it is at the root of public.

The idea of "common," though admittedly on the same continuum as "collective," is a very different idea indeed. Parker points out in his book that when a government imposes collectivism on a state, it not only destroys private life, it destroys

public life as well. "Common" has no meaning for the collective mentality. It is simply not necessary because the task of distinguishing between what is private and individual, between what is one's own and what is somebody else's, is not necessary.

Not the Government

Finally, there is the problem of the relationship between public and political and governmental. Is the public the same as the polity? Many would say that a public school is a school supported by government funds. In fact, a United States senator said to me not long ago, "The public schools are not really the public's schools; they are the government's schools." The most consistent use of public today is as a synonym for government or political. What is a public official? Most would say that a public official is one who spends his or her life in politics or in an elected office in government. That easy substitution of terms is not justified.

But it is common in the literature now to see "the organized public," the government or state substituted for the "public." We talk of a "private" and a "public" sector, but we usually mean the for-profit business sector in the first instance and the governmental sector in the second. The real public sector is awkwardly classed as the not-for-profit private sector. Actually, the public is a complete idea in itself, apart from the idea of the organized public. The root words for public are not the same as the root words for the polity, the state, the government. The public consists of those people who act together with an understanding of their relationship to each other. The polity, coming from the Greek *polis*, is the public organized to carry on the functions of the "city" (an association to pursue the good life, not just city government). The concept of government is a very distant cousin of public. "Government" comes from the Greek *kybernan* (to steer). It consists of institutions established by the public for the control or direction of certain, usually very limited, activities.

Perhaps it would be better if we understood the public's relation to the polity, or the state, much in the same way we understand hydrogen's relationship to water. Hydrogen is most certainly not water. So, the public is vital to the creation of government but still not the government. There is a public life apart from governmental life. The public is the base atom from which we construct the molecule of government. It is the yarn from which we weave the cloth of politics.

A Third Option

There can be no vital political life, no viable institutions of government, no sense of mastery over our shared fate, no effective common endeavors of any kind without there being a foundation of public awareness and spirit. What we may be groping for in commissions and in domestic policy associations may be the reconstitutions of a public. Certainly if there were a public sphere, we would have more choices in solving our problems. Now we are limited to basically two options in making corrections. We can increase the responsibilities of the private (i.e., business) sector, or we can improve the performance of government. But if the public sphere were once again real and available, we might not only have a third set of options, but we might also have options that would get us closer to the problems behind the problems.

If the idea of the public were available to us, the question of who is attending to giving us the healthiest, the richest, and the best public life possible would become important. Perhaps it is not exactly accurate to say that the public has to be created. But if the public is in some way like maturity, then it is correct to say that the quality of the public is, by definition, unassured, just as the degree of maturity is unassured. The question of who and what creates public has everything to do with all that depends on public life — all political processes, all government institutions, all agencies of our common endeavor.

Discussion Guide

We invite you to engage in conversation with your friends, neighbors, family, peers, fellow workers, and associates about the ideas found in this booklet and others in the *Reflections on America* series. Conversation filters ideas through the experience and knowledge of others, so that the ideas emerge richer, clearer, and more complete.

Remember that you are in charge. You are responsible for initiating conversation about "How fares the Republic?" Your authority and responsibility are clearly stated in the document that governs our lives, the document that begins, "We, the People...."

We trust that you will find this series helpful as you continue your conversations about values and hopes for our nation. This talking together may take the form of discussion groups, study circles, forums in your living room, Sunday school, in the classroom, around the kitchen table, or any place you find appropriate for some serious conversation and reflection.

Suggested Questions for Discussion

- Pete Rose speaks of habits, and suggests that the more good habits you have the more successful you are going to be. What good habits would you like to see the American people concentrate on developing?
- Warren E. Burger says, "We have done a very poor job of teaching the young our heritage." Since all of us (not only teachers) are responsible for educating our youth, how might we do a better job? What might *you* do? What values about our Constitution most need to be shared?
- How fares our Republic? What are our prospects? What makes *you* optimistic?
- What holds us together? Are we in a moral slump as some suggest, or is there a renewed spirit and commitment to basic values as others suggest?
- What kind of America do you see now and in

the future?

- What are the questions we need to be asking ourselves as we celebrate the bicentennial of the Constitution?
- How do we communicate our idealism?
- Is the Constitution still adequate for our needs and problems?
- What do you believe is the core value most closely held by the public?
- If you were developing a list of the basic public philosophy of our country, what would you include?

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Abigail Adams

—A Bicentennial Portrait

In 1744, Abigail Smith was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts. Her father, William Smith, was a Congregational minister and her mother, Elizabeth Quincy, came from a prominent family in the colony. Her background and marriage would lead to a life with more affluence and intellectual freedom than most American women of her time. Although she had no formal education, Abigail was taught at home and made great use of her father's library. The exposure to these books and her father's emphasis on reason and duty in his religious preaching helped shape the straightforward thinking that was evident in her writing. In 1764 she married John Adams, a young lawyer from Braintree, Massachusetts. From the beginning John Adams was drawn to the responsibilities of public life. Theirs would be a marriage marked by separations, as his public affairs often took him away from home.

As a woman, Abigail was allowed no public role in the political world. But through discussions and letters she was quite influential in John Adams's political development. John was both a driven and an insecure man and he found that Abigail gave him a needed outlet for his thinking and a sense of stability. Through her many letters, Abigail was able to give a more public voice to her own political thoughts and helped to shape the views of her husband and son. She is well known for her famous letter of 1776, urging that those fighting for Independence must "remember the ladies." In her letters, Abigail did not propose that women have an equal vote or public roles, but that they be protected as in keeping with the laws of a state based on equality and freedom.

When the first shots were fired in 1775, John Adams left for Congress in Philadelphia leaving his family perilously close to the British lines. In addition to the dangers of the war, Abigail had to deal with the various epidemics that swept the

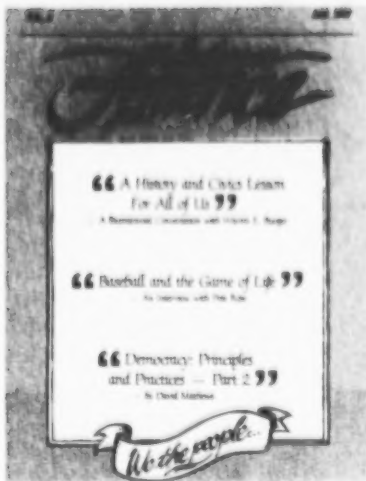
country and threatened her family. She also had to manage the home, the investments, and the property of the Adamses. Their personal wealth suffered from Adams's absence from his law practice. Yet even with these sacrifices, Abigail was firmly behind the fight for independence. "Is it not better to die the last of British freeman than live the first of British slaves?"

Abigail faced seven pregnancies, raised five children, and managed the finances of the family virtually as a widow to the cause. Through it all she felt that she was serving her country. When she was pregnant with her seventh child and very fearful of the dangers of childbirth, John Adams left to serve another year in Congress.

Abigail was convinced, however, that the country's newly found freedom relied on the morality and education of the next generations. She advocated the education of both the sons *and* the daughters. She believed that it was the woman's role to ensure the continuation of the Republic by instilling virtues in their husbands and sons.

Abigail eloquently defended and promoted the role of women in the War for Independence and the writing of the Constitution. Though she worked within the constraints of her time, she was aware of the important role that women played. As noted historian Oscar Handlin wrote:

Abigail Adams in her life exemplified what it meant to be a woman, an American and a revolutionary of the transitional period between colonial status and independence.... The role she defined for herself as a woman was that of a wife, but a role entirely the equal of her husband's — not the same but equal. As an American she discovered the uniqueness of her nation's ideas, conventions, and habits of behavior by contrast with those of the women of London and Paris.



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